

# Cambodia Regime Vows Not to Give Up, But Seeks Cease-Fire and Negotiations

NYTimes APR 14 1975

By SYDNEY H. SCHANBERG  
Special to The New York Times

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia, April 13—The new military Government in Phnom Penh vowed today that despite the "very grave" military situation and the evacuation of the American Embassy it would refuse under any circumstances to surrender to the insurgents who surround the Cambodian capital.

"We are determined to stay on to continue our resistance and to struggle alongside our people," Premier Long Boret said at a news conference this afternoon, speaking on behalf of the generals who have been running the Government since yesterday. "There will be no surrender," he declared.

The Premier said that while continuing the military struggle, the Government would "make every effort" to persuade the other side to "accept

our offer of a cease-fire followed by negotiations and national reconciliation."

## Popular Vote Asked

Asked what the Government's conditions for such negotiations were, he said there were only two—that there be no surrender and that the Cambodian people themselves be allowed to decide, by democratic means such as referendum or plebiscite, the future form of their leadership and government.

The Communist-led Cambodian insurgents, whose forces are at some points only a few miles from the capital and its vital airport, have consistently refused all suggestions of peace talks.

Mr. Long Boret was not optimistic—he said an insurgent push against the city was expected and "we hope we can hold"—but he exhibited a

sense of pluckiness and determination that seemed aimed at impressing the handful of foreign newsmen who have remained in the capital. Most correspondents left with the United States Embassy staff when it was evacuated yesterday on Marine helicopters.

## Proposal by U.S. Envoy

The Premier's news conference, beyond publicizing the Government's will to go on fighting against the odds, also served to shed some light on the hectic events of the last few days surrounding the American evacuation and the political moves made by the Americans just before they left.

11 APR  
Mr. Long Boret said, for example, that on Friday morning Ambassador John Gunther Dean proposed that the Government invite the exiled Prince

Continued on Page 19, Column 1

# Cambodia Regime Vows Not to Give Up

Continued From Page 1, Col. 7

Nordom Sihanouk, nominal leader of the insurgents, to come back from Peking and lead the country—a suggestion favored by Saukham Khoy, who was their Acting President, but rejected by the generals and other hard-line Government leader, including Mr. Long Boret.

Mr. Saukham Khoy, thus discredited by the Government, left the country yesterday on the same helicopter that carried Ambassador Dean. The new military Government has now declared him a criminal who should be brought back for trial, apparently on a charge of having deserted his post without notice.

Premier Long Boret said the American evacuation had satisfied the insurgents' objection to the American presence here, "so now the other side should accept our offer for a cease-fire."

A newsman asked the Premier how he intended to deal with another of the insurgents' objections — their refusal to consider talking with certain Phnom Penh Government leaders, including himself, whom they have branded a "traitor" who must be executed.

Mr. Long Boret replied with emotion: "For myself and also for other leaders of the Government, we are ready to make any sacrifice, including resigning, but on one condition. The other side must first accept a cease-fire and negotiations."

Asked if this meant he would not step down until he had an assurance that peace talks would take place, he said: "If I resign without a guarantee, what would be the sense?"

The news conference, which lasted an hour, was held in a conference room next to the Premier's office. Mr. Long Boret answered questions alternately in French, English and Khmer, using an interpreter. He looked like a man with problems but he nevertheless seemed in good spirits, answering many questions in a vigor-

ous tone with animated gestures.

The 42-year-old Premier repeatedly sidestepped questions about whether his Government had made any significant contacts recently with the insurgent side, but his answers gave rise to speculation that something was being attempted.

When a questioner noted that Government officials in Thailand had said contacts were in progress in Bangkok between the two sides, Mr. Long Boret said, "No comment," but then added, pointedly: "For the interests of peace, I refuse to make any comment."

The Cambodian Foreign Minister, Keuky Lim, is now in Bangkok for unstated reasons, and Ambassador Dean is also there, although it is unclear whether the Americans would be involved at this point.

American negotiating aims seem centered now on Prince Sihanouk, who has been living in exile in Peking since his overthrow as Cambodian Chief of State in 1970, a move that precipitated the war here.

## Identified With China

Though Prince Sihanouk has become identified with China and North Vietnam, the Americans, who have for five years backed the Government that ousted him, now regard him as a Cambodian nationalist and perhaps the only possible moderating influence on the ultimate outcome. Secretary of State Kissinger has indicated that he would like to see Prince Sihanouk at the head of some kind of coalition that would keep the Communists from dominating Cambodia, or at least limit them to something less than total power.

Reports from Washington say that the Ford Administration contacted Prince Sihanouk in Peking on Friday and suggested that he return to Phnom Penh. But he refused. *11 APR*

These Washington moves apparently coincided with the American Embassy's unsuccessful efforts here to persuade this Government to call Prince

Sihanouk back as leader.

Though there is no immediate way to confirm this, it seems as if the failure of the plan—which was apparently an 11-hour American effort to salvage something out of the shambles here—may have been what prompted Washington's evacuation order.

The Americans apparently felt that with no chance for a quick compromise or cease-fire here, the military situation—with Congress refusing any more military aid—was fundamentally hopeless and that it would not be prudent to keep embassy staff members here until there was fighting in the streets.

The embassy, in its final hours here, offered to take top Government leaders out of the country, in a gesture of protection, but except for Saukham Khoy, all the key people decline.

"I refused," said Mr. Long Boret with some heat. "I have my countrymen here. I share the agony and suffering of my people. Why should I go? This is my country."

Later, when discussing the American supply airlift, which halted when the embassy was evacuated but which Washington says will now be resumed for about 10 days, the Premier was asked what he would do when the airlift ran out. "I will starve to death with my countrymen," he replied.

He also repeatedly used phrases such as "defending the liberty and independence of the Khmer people who have suffered so much in this war"

The Premier used the news conference to "appeal to all international organizations for supplies, especially for humanitarian assistance."

The supply question is the most critical one here. With American aid ending in two weeks, at the latest, even if the airlift is resumed, this government cannot survive very long on its present stockpiles of food, fuel and, perhaps most important, ammunition.